



A new plan for **High-quality, timely vocational services**

L&I is considering shifting the relationship we have with vocational providers to working more closely with the principals of vocational firms to include making referrals for services directly to the firms. Currently the primary relationship is with individual vocational counselors.

We are seeking input on the concept. Your ideas will help us design better ways to work together and improve the services provided to workers and employers.

Why is L&I considering this change?

We need timely and quality vocational services on a consistent basis.

In the current state, there is considerable variance among vocational counselors in terms of work product quality and timeliness of services. L&I staff spend time ensuring the quality of vocational reports. The “re-work” rate is high. Lean principles encourage systems that ensure quality and timeliness at the earliest possible step, rather than waiting until the end of the process. This reduces re-work, waste and frustration and increases quality, and timeliness.

L&I gains significantly from partnerships with suppliers and helping them improve. We want to create on-going collaborative relationships with the principals of vocational firms and believe they can effectively support their staff when it comes to training, staffing cases, providing coverage, managing caseloads, etc. In short, we want vocational firms to build and maintain systems that will better support their staff and ensure the products and services meet our needs for quality and timeliness. And, we want to assist our partners in achieving this goal.

What would the new system look like?

Some aspects of the new system may include:

- A clear firm level point of contact for issues of service delivery.
- The firm assumes responsibility for assignment of new vocational referrals to VRCs.
- Vocational referral screens display performance data for firms with drill down to individual VRC data.
- L&I partners with firms to develop clear expectations and to verify if they have an effective infrastructure that supports their staff and ensures delivery of products and services that consistently meet our needs.

What would not change?

- Service requirements in WAC would remain the same.
- Payment policies would remain the same.
- L&I staff retains the ability to request a particular VRC be assigned to a referral.

Next steps

We will be gathering feedback from all stakeholders. Your ideas will help us design the best ways to work together and improve services for workers and employers.

